

INTRODUCING THE NATIONAL COMMISSION ON EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC SECURITY ACT

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 2003

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the National Commission on Employment and Economic Security Act.

More than 2.6 million Americans have lost their jobs since President Bush took office in January 2001. In fact, the Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that in September 2003, 9 million Americans were officially jobless. Some experts, including the BLS, have suggested that the number of unemployed or underemployed is actually somewhere near 15.5 million. The BLS notes that approximately 6.5 million workers are underemployed or so frustrated at the current job market that they have given up looking for jobs.

During times of high unemployment, Americans experience increases in domestic abuse, alcoholism, crime, illness, and in many instances, suicides. All of these increases stem not only from the loss of one's job, but also from the depression that develops as a result of extended unemployment.

Realize, current U.S. public policy addresses the economic hardships that arise from unemployment through the unemployment insurance program. For a privileged few, the government even assists in providing health care to the unemployed. But what the U.S. government fails to do is provide assistance to the unemployed in dealing with the human dimension of unemployment.

Perhaps this is true because the human factor does not allow for a one size fits all formula solution. Or perhaps it's because Congress never thinks about the human factor, labeling the unemployed as lazy and unmotivated, rather than the victims of economic situations of the times that they are. But for whatever reason, Congress has never addressed this very important tool in understanding the effects of long-term unemployment. That, Mr. Speaker, is completely unacceptable.

The legislation I introduce today establishes the National Commission on Employment and Economic Security, a national commission to examine the psychological effects of extended unemployment. Specifically, the 15 member commission is instructed to examine increases in violence by employees and former employees in the workplace and in their private lives, the effects of well-paying jobs in the U.S., the psychological insecurity caused by the loss of a job, and make recommendations to the Legislative and Executive branches on actions to alleviate the psychological insecurity of the U.S. workforce.

I am confident that this commission will provide Congress and the President with an array of policy recommendations on how we might best address the human factor of unemployment. The livelihoods of more than fifteen million Americans are depending on it.

I ask for the support of my colleagues, and I urge the House Leadership to bring the bill to the floor expeditiously.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE HISTORIC SECOND BAPTIST CHURCH IN CELEBRATION OF ITS 155TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 2003

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Second Baptist Church, the second oldest African American Baptist congregation in the District of Columbia, as it prepares to celebrate its 155th anniversary on Sunday, November 16, 2003, and its designation as a historic landmark in the District of Columbia Inventory of Historic Sites by the Historic Preservation Review Board.

History has documented the critical role African American churches have played not only as places of spiritual fortification, but also as centers of political activism, and neighborhood preservation. Second Baptist Church is a shining example of these functions.

Second Baptist Church, located at 816 3rd Street, NW., is a longstanding anchor of a changing neighborhood north of H Street and west of North Capitol Street. Founded in 1848, Second Baptist Church was started 14 years before slaves in the District of Columbia were freed.

The church was erected in 1894 and designed by prominent Washington architect, Appleton P. Clark, Jr. Second Baptist Church represents a revival of the early phase of Gothic church architecture, but rendered in late Victorian fashion. The beautiful rose window, square towers and rusticated limestone on a granite base are suggestive of Romanesque.

Second Baptist Church began when seven members of the First Colored Baptist Church, now Nineteenth Baptist Church, left to organize the Second Colored Baptist Church of Washington City, District of Columbia.

Second Baptist Church served as a station on the Underground Railroad during the Civil War and the preceding years. It was one of the few Negro churches in Washington, D.C. that had a black minister prior to President Lincoln's Inauguration.

Second Baptist Church is considered the "Mother Church" for the Baptist community because from it Mt. Carmel Baptist Church in NW; Mt. Olive Baptist Church in NW; Rehoboth Baptist Church in SW; Central Baptist Church (later disbanded); St. Paul Baptist Church in Bladensburg, MD; Ebenezer and First Baptist in Takoma Park, MD were formed.

During the course of its 155 years, Second Baptist Church has had only 15 pastors: Licentiate H.H. Butler—1848; Rev. Jeremiah Asher—1849; Rev. Gustavus Brown—1850; Rev. Henry Butler—1853; Rev. Sandy Alexander—1856; Rev. Caleb Woodward—1861; Rev. John Mays (Maze)—1864; Rev. Sandy Alexander—1865; Rev. Chauncey Leonard—1868; Rev. John Gaines—1869; Rev. Madison Gaskins—1871; Rev. William Bishop Johnson—1883; Rev. Dr. J.L.S. Hollowman—1917; Rev. Smalls Bartley—1971; and Rev. Dr. James E. Terrell—1997 to the present.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House to join me in saluting Rev. James E. Terrell, and the congregation of Second Baptist Church in the Dis-

trict of Columbia on the occasion of its 155th anniversary, November 16, 2003.

FREEDOM FOR HÉCTOR FERNANDO MASEDA GUTIERREZ

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 2003

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about Héctor Fernando Maseda Gutierrez, a prisoner of conscience in totalitarian Cuba.

Mr. Maseda, age 60, is an engineer and physicist by profession. He studied the logic and reason behind how machines work, how nature operates. He also realized that Castro's repressive regime constitutes a nightmare for the Cuban people.

Mr. Maseda joined pro-democracy groups that work to obtain basic human rights for the people of Cuba. He eventually became a member of the Liberal Democratic Cuban Party and the director of the Liberal Studies Center. As Mr. Maseda became more active within the movement, he began to chronicle the savage practices of the regime for independent newspapers and websites. Unfortunately, not all of these articles reached the outside world, among the articles confiscated by the political police were: "The forced workers of Cuba" and "Havana: the capital of sexual tourism."

On March 18, 2003, Mr. Maseda was arrested and his typewriter, a fax machine, books, and his journalistic writings were confiscated. In a sham trial, he was subsequently sentenced to 20 years in the Cuban gulag for writing articles "which twist the society and reality of Cuba" and for "maintaining relations with Florida International University."

Mr. Maseda currently languishes in the Cuban totalitarian gulag. He has been muted and gagged for writing about the systematic abuses of human rights that occur under Castro's totalitarian rule. Mr. Speaker, the reality of Castro's repressive regime continues to be that men and women who write the truth are locked in the Cuban gulag while their oppressor remains in power.

My colleagues, we must fight for freedom whenever and wherever human beings are shackled by totalitarian dictators. We must demand the immediate release of Héctor Fernando Maseda Gutierrez.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO JEANNE POWER

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 2003

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Jeanne Power, and thank her for the extraordinary contributions she has made to the community of Steamboat Springs and the State of Colorado. Jeanne has spent her life assisting others, and her dedication and selflessness is a shining example to all Americans.

After graduating from the University of Wyoming, Jeanne returned to her home in Steamboat Springs, where she became a member of